E 87
.D76

By Samuel G. Drake

INDIAN CAPTIVITIES.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS 1876. CITY OF WASHINGTON

NARRATIVE

OF THE CAPTIVITY OF JOHN ORTIZ, A SPANIARD, WHO WAS ELEVEN YEARS A PRISONER AMONG THE INDIANS OF FLORIDA.

In the year 1528 Pamphilo de Narvaez, with a commission, constituting him governor of Florida, or "all the lands lying from the river of Palms to the cape of Florida," sailed for that country with 400 foot and 20 horse, in five ships. With this expedition went a Spaniard, named John Ortiz, a native of Seville, whose connections were among the nobility of Castile. Although we have no account of what part Ortiz acted in Narvaez's expedition, or how he escaped its disastrous issue, yet it may not be deemed out of place to notice briefly here that issue.

This Narvaez had acquired some notoriety by the manner in which he had executed a commission against Cortez. He had been ordered by the governor of Cuba to seize the destroyer of Mexico, but was himself overthrown and deserted by his men. On falling into the hands of Cortez, his arrogance did not forsake him, and he addressed him thus: "Esteem it good fortune that you have taken me prisoner." "Nay," replied Cortez, "it is the least of the things I have done in Mexico." To return to the expedition of which we have promised to speak.

Narvaez landed in Florida not very far from, or perhaps at the bay of Apalachee, in the month of April, and marched into the country with his men. They knew no other direction but that pointed out by the Indians, whom they compelled to act as guides. Their first disappointment was on their arrival

E87
.D76

at the village of Apalachee, where, instead of a splendid town, filled with immense treasure, as they had anticipated, they found only about 40 Indian wigwams. When they visited one Indian town its inhabitants would get rid of them by telling them of another, where their wants would be gratified. Such was the manner in which Narvaez and his companions rambled over 800 miles of country, in about six months' time, at a vast expense of men and necessaries which they carried with them; for the Indians annoyed them at every pass, not only cutting off many of the men, but seizing on their baggage upon every occasion which offered. Being now arrived upon the coast, in a wretched condition, they constructed some miserable barks corresponding with their means, in which none but men in such extremities would embark. In these they coasted toward New Spain. When they came near the mouths of the Mississippi they were cast away in a storm, and all but 15 of their number perished. Out of these 15, 4 only lived to reach Mexico, and these after 8 years wholly spent in wanderings from place to place, enduring incredible hardships and miseries.

The next year after the end of Narvaez's expedition, the intelligence of his disaster having reached his wife, whom he left in Cuba, she fitted out a small company, consisting of 20 or 30 men, who sailed in a brigantine to search after him, hoping some fortuitous circumstance might have prolonged his existence upon the coast, and that he might be found. Of this number was John Ortiz, the subject of this narrative.

On their arrival there, they sought an opportunity to have an interview with the first Indians they should meet. Opportunity immediately offered, and as soon as Indians were discovered, the Spaniards advanced towards them in their boats, while the Indians came down to the shore. These wily people practised a stratagem upon this occasion, which to this day seems a mysterious one, and we have no means of explaining it.

Three or four Indians came near the shore, and setting a stick in the ground, placed in a cleft in its top a letter, and withdrawing a little distance, made signs to the Spaniards to come and take it. All the company, except John Ortiz and one more, refused to go out for the letter, rightly judging it to be used only to ensnare them; but Ortiz, presuming it was from Narvaez, and containing some account of himself, would not be persuaded from venturing on shore to bring it, although all the rest but the one who accompanied him strenuously argued against it.

Now there was an Indian village very near this place, and

342

no sooner had Ortiz and his companion advanced to the place where the letter was displayed, than a multitude came running from it, and surrounding them, seized eagerly upon them. The number of the Indians was so great, that the Spaniards in the vessels did not dare to attempt to rescue them, and saw them carried forcibly away. In this first onset the man who accompanied Ortiz was killed, he having made resistance when he was seized.

Not far from the place where they were made prisoners, was another Indian town, or village, consisting of about 8 or 10 houses or wigwams. These houses were made of wood, and covered with palm-leaves. At one end of this village there was a building, which the captive called a temple, but of what dimensions it was he makes no mention. Over the door of entrance into this temple there was placed the figure of a bird, carved out in wood, and it was especially surprising that this bird had gilded eyes. No attempt is made by Ortiz even to conjecture how or by whom the art of gilding was practised, in this wild and distant region, nor does he mention meeting with any other specimen of that art during his captivity. At the opposite extremity of this village stood the house of the chief, or cazique, as he was often called, upon an eminence, raised, as it was supposed, for a fortification. These things remained the same ten years afterwards, and are mentioned by the historian of Fernando De Soto's Invasion of Florida. The name of the chief of this village was Ucita, before whom was presented the captive, Ortiz, who was condemned to suffer immediate death.

The manner of his death was by torture, which was to be effected in this wise. The executioners set four stakes in the ground, and to these they fastened four poles; the captive was then taken, and with his arms and legs extended, was by them bound to these poles, at such a distance from the ground, that a fire, made directly under him, would be a long time in consuming him. Never did a poor victim look with greater certainty to death for relief, than did John Ortiz at this time. The fire had already begun to rage, when a most remarkable circumstance happened to save his life—a daughter of the stern Ucita arose and plead for him. Among other things she said these to her father: "My kind father, why kill this poor stranger? he can do you nor any of us any injury, seeing he is but one and alone. It is better that you should keep him confined; for even in that condition he may sometime be of great service to you." The chief was silent for a short time, but finally ordered him to be released from his place of torture. They had no sooner taken the thongs from his wrists and

ankles, than they proceeded to wash and dress his wounds, and to do things to make him comfortable.

As soon as his wounds were healed, Ortiz was stationed at the entrance of the temple, before mentioned, to guard it against such as were not allowed to enter there; but especially to guard its being profaned by wild beasts; for as it was a place of sacrifices, wolves were its constant visitors. He had not long been in this office, when an event occurred, which threw him into great consternation. Human victims were brought in as sacrifices and deposited here; and not long after Ortiz had been placed as sentinel, the body of a young Indian was brought and laid upon a kind of sarcophagus, which, from the multitudes that had from time to time been offered there, was surrounded with blood and bones! a most rueful sight, as ever any eye beheld!—here an arm fresh torn from its place, reeking with blood, another exhibiting but bone and sinews from the mangling jaws of wild beasts! Such was the place he was ordered to guard, through day and night—doomed to sit himself down among this horrible assemblage of the dead. When left alone he reflected that his escape from fire was not so fortunate for him as he had hoped; for now, his naturally superstitious mind was haunted by the presence of innumerable ghosts, who stalked in every place, and which he had from his youth been taught to believe were capable of doing him all manner of injuries, even to the depriving of life.

There was no reflection in those remote ages of the real situation of all the living, in respect to the great valley of death in which all beings are born and nursed, and which no length of years is sufficient to carry them through. Let us for a moment cast our eyes around us. Where are we? Not in the same temple with Ortiz, but in one equally vast. We can see nothing but death in every place. The very ground we walk upon is composed of the decayed limbs of our own species, with those of a hundred others. A succession of animals have been rising and falling for many thousand years in all parts of the world. They have died all around us—in our very places. We do not distinctly behold the hands, the feet, or the bones of them, because they have crumbled to dust beneath our feet. And cannot the ghosts of these as well arise as of those slain yesterday? The affirmative cannot be denied.

As we have said, Ortiz found himself snatched from one dreadful death, only, as he imagined, to be thrust into the jaws of another, yet more terrible. Experience, however, soon proved to him, that the dead, at least those with whom he was forced to dwell, either could or would not send forth their

spirits in any other shape than such phantoms as his own mind created, in dreams and reveries. We can accustom ourselves to almost anything, and it was not long before our captive contemplated the dead bodies with which he was surrounded, with about the same indifference as he did the walls of the temple that encompassed them.

How long after Ortiz had been placed to guard the temple of sacrifices the following fearful midnight adventure happened, we have no means of stating with certainty, nor is it very material; it is, however, according to his own account, as follows: A young Indian had been killed and his body placed in this temple. Late one night, Ortiz found it closely invested by wolves, which, in spite of all his efforts, entered the place, and carried away the body of the Indian. The fright and the darkness were so heavy upon Ortiz that he knew not that the body was missing until morning. It appears, however, that he recovered himself, seized a heavy cudgel, which he had prepared at hand, and commenced a general attack upon the beasts in the temple, and not only drove them out, but pursued them a good way from the place. In the pursuit he came up with one which he gave a mortal blow, although he did not know it at the time. Having returned from this hazardous adventure to the temple, he impatiently awaited the return of daylight. When the day dawned, great was his distress at the discovery of the loss of the body of the dead Indian, which was especially aggravated, because it was the son of a great chief.

When the news of this affair came to the ears of Ucita, he at once resolved to have Ortiz put to death; but before executing his purpose he sent out several Indians to pursue after the wolves, to recover, if possible, the sacrifice. Contrary to all expectation, the body was found, and not far from it the body of a huge wolf also. When Ucita learned these facts, he countermanded the order for his execution.

Three long years was Ortiz doomed to watch this wretched temple of the dead. At the end of this time he was relieved only by the overthrow of the power of Ucita. This was effected by a war between the two rival chiefs, Ucita and Mocoso.

The country over which Mocoso reigned was only two days' journey from that of Ucita, and separated from it by a large river or estuary. Mocoso came upon the village of Ucita in the night with an army, and attacked his castle, and took it, and also the rest of his town. Ucita and his people fled from it with all speed, and the warriors of Mocoso burnt it to the ground. Ucita had another village upon the coast, not far from the former, to which he and his people fled, and

were not pursued by their enemies. Soon after he had established himself in his new residence, he resolved upon making a sacrifice of Ortiz. Here again he was wonderfully preserved, by the same kind friend that had delivered him at the beginning of his captivity. The daughter of the chief, knowing her intreaties would avail nothing with her father, determined to aid him to make an escape; accordingly, she had prepared the way for his reception with her father's enemy, Mocoso. She found means to pilot him secretly out of her father's village, and accompanied him a league or so on his way, and then left him with directions how to proceed to the residence of Mocoso. Having travelled all night as fast as he could, Ortiz found himself next morning upon the borders of the river which bounded the territories of the two rival chiefs. He was now thrown into great trouble, for he could not proceed farther without discovery, two of Mocoso's men being then fishing in the river; and, although he came as a friend, yet he had no way to make that known to them, not understanding their language, nor having means wherewith to discover his character by a sign. At length he observed their arms, which they had left at considerable distance from the place where they then were. Therefore, as his only chance of succeeding in his enterprise, he crept slyly up and seized their arms to prevent their injuring him. When they saw this they fled with all speed towards their town. Ortiz followed them for some distance, trying by language as well as by signs to make them understand that he only wished protection with them, but all in vain, and he gave up the pursuit and waited quietly the result. It was not long before a large party came running armed towards him, and when they approached, he was obliged to cover himself behind trees to avoid their arrows. Nevertheless his chance of being killed seemed certain, and that very speedily; but it providentially happened, that there was an Indian among them who now surrounded him, who understood the language in which he spoke, and thus he was again rescued from another perilous situation.

Having now surrendered himself into the hands of the Indians, four of their number were dispatched to carry the tidings to Mocoso, and to learn his pleasure in regard to the disposition to be made of him; but instead of sending any word of direction, Mocoso went himself out to meet Ortiz. When he came to him, he expressed great joy at seeing him, and made every profession that he would treat him well. Ortiz, however, had seen enough of Indians to warn him against a too implicit confidence in his pretensions; and what added in no small degree to his doubts about his future destiny, was this very

extraordinary circumstance. Immediately after the preliminary congratulations were over, the chief made him take an oath, "after the manner of Christians," that he would not run away from him to seek out another master; to which he very readily assented. At the same time Mocoso, on his part, promised Ortiz that he would not only treat him with due kindness, but, that if ever an opportunity offered by which he could return to his own people, he would do all in his power to assist him in it; and, to keep his word inviolate, he swore to what he had promised, "after the manner of the Indians." Nevertheless, our captive looked upon all this in no other light than as a piece of cunning, resorted to by the chief, to make him only a contented slave; but we shall see by the sequel, that this Indian chief dealt not in European guile, and that he was actuated only by benevolence of heart.

Three years more soon passed over the head of Ortiz, and he experienced nothing but kindness and liberty. He spent his time in wandering over the delightful savannahs of Florida, and through the mazes of the palmetto, and beneath the refreshing shades of the wide-spreading magnolia—pursuing the deer in the twilight of morning, and the scaly fry in the silver lakes in the cool of the evening. In all this time we hear of nothing remarkable that happened to Ortiz, or to the chief or his people. When war or famine does not disturb the quiet of Indians they enjoy themselves to the full extent of their natures—perfectly at leisure, and ready to devote days together to the entertainment of themselves, and any travellers or friends that may sojourn with them.

About the close of the first three years of Ortiz's sojourning with the tribe of Indians under Mocoso, there came startling intelligence into their village, and alarm and anxiety sat impatiently upon the brow of all the inhabitants. This was occasioned by the arrival of a runner, who gave information that as some of Mocoso's men were in their canoes a great way out at sea fishing, they had discovered ships of the white men approaching their coast. Mocoso, after communing with himself a short time, went to Ortiz with the information, which, when he had imparted it to him, caused peculiar sensations in his breast, and a brief struggle with conflicting feelings; for one cannot forget his country and kindred, nor can he forget his savior and protector. In short, Mocoso urged him to go to the coast and see if he could make a discovery of the ships. This proceeding on the part of the chief silenced the fears of Ortiz, and he set out upon the discovery; but when he had spent several days of watchfulness and eager expectation, without seeing or gaining any other intelligence of ships, he was

ready to accuse the chief of practising deception upon him, to try his fidelity; he was soon satisfied, however, that his suspicions were without foundation, although no other information was ever gained of ships at that time.

At length, when six years more had elapsed, news of a less doubtful character was brought to the village of Mocoso. It was, that some white people had actually landed upon their coast, and had possessed themselves of the village of Ucista, and driven out him and his men. Mocoso immediately imparted this information to Ortiz, who, presuming it was an idle tale, as upon the former occasion, affected to care nothing for it, and told his chief that no wordly thing would induce him to leave his present master; but Mocoso persisted, and among arguments advanced this, that he had done his duty, and that if Ortiz would not go out and seek his white brethren, and they should leave the country, and him behind, he could not blame him, and withal seriously confirming the news. In the end he concluded to go out once more, and after thanking his chief for his great kindness, set off, with twelve of his best men whom Mocoso had appointed for his guides, to find the white people.

When they had proceeded a considerable part of the way, they came into a plain, and suddenly in sight of a party of 120 men, who proved to be some of those of whom they had heard. When they discovered Ortiz and his men, they pressed towards them in warlike array, and although they made every signal of friendship in their power, yet these white men rushed upon them, barbarously wounding two of them, and the others saved themselves only by flight. Ortiz himself came near being killed. A horseman rushed upon him, knocked him down, and was prevented from dealing a deadly blow only by a timely ejaculation in Spanish which he made. It was in these words: "I am a Christian—do not kill me, nor these poor men who have given me my life."

It was not until this moment that the soldiers discovered their mistake, of friends for enemies, for Ortiz was, in all appearance, an Indian; and now, with the aid of Ortiz, his attending Indians were collected, and they were all carried to the camp of the white men, each riding behind a soldier upon his horse.

Ortiz now found himself among an army of Spaniards, commanded by one Fernando De Soto, who had come into that country with a great armament of 600 men in 7 ships, in search of riches; an expedition undertaken with great ostentation, raised by the expectation of what it was to afford, but it ended, as all such undertakings should, in disgrace and mortification.

Soto considered the acquisition of Ortiz of very great importance, for although he could not direct him to any mountains of gold or silver, yet he was acquainted with the language of the Indians, and he kept him with him during his memorable expedition, to act in the capacity of interpreter.

It was in the spring of 1543, that the ferocious and savage Soto fell a prey to his misguided ambition. Ortiz had died a few months before, and with him fell the already disappointed hopes of his leader. They had taken up winter quarters at a place called Autiamque, upon the Washita, or perhaps Red River, and it was here that difficulties began to thicken upon them. When in the spring they would march from thence, Soto was grieved, because he had lost so good an interpreter, and readily felt that difficulties were clustering around in a much more formidable array. Hitherto, when they were at a loss for a knowledge of the country, all they had to do was to lie in wait and seize upon some Indian, and Ortiz always could understand enough of the language to relieve them from all perplexity about their course; but now they had no other interpreter but a young Indian of Cutifachiqui, who understood a little Spanish; "yet it required sometimes a whole day for him to explain what Ortiz would have done in four words." At other times he was so entirely misunderstood, that after they had followed his direction through a tedious march of a whole day, they would find themselves obliged to return again to the same place."

Such was the value of Ortiz in the expedition of Soto, as that miserable man conceived; but had not Soto fallen in with him, how different would have been the fate of a multitude of men, Spaniards and Indians. Upon the whole, it is hard to say which was the predominant trait in the character of Soto and his followers, avarice or cruelty.

At one time, because their guides had led them out of the way, Moscoso, the successor of Soto, caused them to be hanged upon a tree and there left. Another, in the early part of the expedition, was saved from the fangs of dogs, at the interference of Ortiz, because he was the only Indian through whom Ortiz could get information. It is as difficult to decide which was the more superstitious, the Indians or the self-styled "Christian Spaniards;" for when Soto died a chief came and offered two young Indians to be killed, that they might accompany and serve the white man to the world of spirits. An Indian guide being violently seized with some malady, fell senseless to the ground. To raise him, and drive away the devil which they supposed was in him, they read a passage over his body from the Bible, and he immediately recovered.

Thus we have given all the particulars we can derive from authentic sources of the captivity and death of John Ortiz. Of Soto's expedition, about which many writers of talents and respectability have employed their pens, it was not our intention particularly to speak, but can refer those, whose curiosity would lead them to pursue it, to a new edition of my CHRONICLES OF THE INDIANS, shortly to be published; but for a rapid and splendid glance over that ground, I will refer the reader to the first volume of Mr. Bancroft's History of the United States. And yet if he would go into minute details, there is the work of Mr. John T. Irving, which will leave little else to be looked for.

NARRATIVE

OF THE CAPTIVITY OF MRS. MARY ROWLANDSON, WIFE OF THE REV. JOSEPH ROWLANDSON, WHO WAS TAKEN PRISONER WHEN LANCASTER WAS DESTROYED, IN THE YEAR 1676; WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

I print this edition of Mrs. Rowlandson's Narrative from the *second Lancaster edition*, with a selection of the notes to that edition, by JOSEPH WILLARD, Esq., which was printed in 1828. Mr. Willard calls his the sixth edition. My own notes are, as in other parts of the work, signed Ed.

ON the 10th of February, 1676, came the Indians with great numbers* upon Lancaster: their first coming was about sunrising. Hearing the noise of some guns, we looked out; several houses were burning, and the smoke ascending to heaven. There were five persons taken in one house; the father and mother, and a sucking child they knocked on the head, the other two they took and carried away alive. There were two others, who, being out of their garrison upon occasion, were set upon, one was knocked on the head, the other escaped. Another there was, who, running along, was shot and wounded, and fell down; he begged of them his life, promising them money, as they told me, but they would not hearken to him, but knocked him on the head, stripped him naked, and split open his bowels. Another, seeing many of the Indians

*Fifteen hundred was the number, according to the best authorities. They were the Wamponoags, led by King Philip, accompanied by the Narrhagansetts, his allies, and also by the Nipmucks and Nashaways, whom his artful eloquence had persuaded to join with him.

H92 74 538

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing Agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date:
[illegible] 1997
BOOKKEEPER
PRESERVATION TECHNOLOGIES, L.P.
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Twp., PA 16066
(412) 779-2111

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

THE NEWBERRY BUILDING
BOUND TO PLEASE
N. MANCHESTER, INDIANA

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 029 821 111 7